

## LONDON BOROUGH OF LEWISHAM

### Minutes of the Lewisham SACRE meeting

which was open to the press and public and was held on  
30 September 2021 at 6.30pm

On Zoom

**These minutes were approved by the SACRE/ ASC on: 24 November 2021**

GROUP	REPRESENTING	NAME	PRESENT
A	Baha'i	Afonso Veiga	Y
A	Islam	Imam Ashraf	
A	Pentecostal Layo's Substitute	Cheryl Abbam	Y
A	Buddhism	David Hutchens	Ap
A	Judaism	Gerald Rose	Y
A	Humanism	Jennifer Sutherland	Y
A	Judaism	Joan Goldberg	Y
A	Humanism	John Turner	
A	Pentecostal	Layo Afuape	
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Substitute	Leanne Rudder	
A	Islam	Ms Aisha Lodhi	
A	Hinduism	Mukunthan Sathasiva Sarma	
A	Roman Catholic	Rt. Rev. Monsignor Nicholas Rotherham	Y
A	Free Church (Assemblies of God) Chair	Pastor Nick Hughes	Y
A	Free Churches (URC)	Rev Raymond Singh	
A	Islam	Imam Sabir	L
A	Hinduism	Vallipuram Bala	
A	Free Church (Baptist)	Vacant	
A	Hinduism	Vacant	
A	Independent Evangelical	vacant	
A	Sikhism	Vacant	
B	The Church of England Primary teacher	Karen Hansen.	Y
B	The Church of England Minister	Paul Wynter	
B	The Church of England Secondary teacher	Samantha Alder	L
B	Diocesan Board (Deputy Chair)	Shaun Burns	L
B	The Church of England Governor		
C	NEU	Andrea Kelly	
C	NEU	Kim Griffiths	Y
C	NEU	Kim Knappett	Y
C	NAS/UWT	Mandy Keeble	
C	Academy/Free School	Vacant	
C	Lewisham Headteachers & Deputies	Vacant	
D	Director of Education	Angela Scattergood	Ap

D	School Governors (Primary)	Caroline O’Kalu	y
D	LA members	Cllr Hilary Moore	A
D	LA members	Cllr Jacq Paschoud	
D	LA members	Cllr Liz Johnston-Franklin	Y
D	School Governors (Secondary)	Vacant	
OTHER	RE School Improvement Officer	Denise Chaplin	y
OTHER	Primary teacher	Judith Nweze	
OTHER	SACRE Clerk	Stephen Sealy	y
OTHER	Young Mayor Team	c/o Katy Brown	
OTHER	Rastafarian (co-optee)	Vacant	
OTHER	Secondary teacher	Korkor Burnett	Y

*(Boxed sections in these minutes signify actions, and underlined sections signify decisions)*

The meeting began at 6.40pm.

### **1a Welcomes and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed all to the meeting and notified the committee that before referring to the agenda a short commemoration would be made in memory of the recently deceased Sabina Nessa.

Angela reported on the support that the school had been given in view of this crime, and reflected on how Sabina’s kindness had been a constant theme when her colleagues and friends had described her. She emphasised the importance of schools teaching boys to respect females but also respecting all others.

Kim reported that the union too was supporting the school and remarked how the need to foster understanding between faiths and in the community highlighted in the borough’s response to this tragedy embodied the work the committee had done on the modules on the journey of life and death and the syllabus generally.

The Chair welcomed the new member, Caroline.

### **1b Apologies for absence and membership update**

Apologies for attendance are noted on page 1.

Denise reported that she had written to members who had not attended in a while. She informed the committee that the post Nigel Desborough held was now vacant. She has approached the Free Church with a view to filling this vacancy. In addition, Caroline Kalu (a new Councillor) will be starting and will fill the Primary School governor role.

She assured the committee that she was actively progressing this.

The Chair expressed his pleasure that the active Councillors had been re-affirmed in their roles.

He briefly explained the significance of the four groups for the new attendees.

### **1c Confirmation of order of items for the meeting**

The committee confirmed that they were happy with this.

### **2 Minutes of the previous SACRE and ASC joint meeting held June 2021 on Zoom. (Led by the Chairs of the meetings)**

All expressed agreement with the accuracy of both meetings' minutes.

### **3 Matters arising from the minutes not on the agenda**

#### **3A SACRE TRAINING**

Denise reported that only one new member had attended the training. It will be re-run after the May Council elections, and Denise committed to circulate the date when this is known.

Kim reported that she had attended and commented on how worthwhile the evening was.

The Chair added that his attendance at the event years previous added valuable context to much of what he had been taught previously and encouraged members to attend.

Denise advised that further SACRE training was being held the following Thursday with a further letter to be sent to SACREs explain the new framework. The Executive had taken on board amendments, which had generated from the NASACRE conference and analysis had been commissioned which would enable the committee to perceive the 'state of the nation'.

She reported that the committee had paid for SACRE members to attend any of the year's national training program, adding that a NASACRE workshop on worldviews was scheduled for November, which will also give members a change to network with their counterparts around the country.

She reported that as the work was being done in partnership with the DfE, Charles Clarke (patron of NASACRE) had suggested that it applies to the Government for funding

#### **3B ANNUAL REPORT FRAMEWORK**

Denise reported that she had sent out a copy of the framework.

#### **3C DIRECTORY OF PLACES OF WORSHIP**

Kim reported that this had been circulated. Only a few updates had been received but her husband had checked websites for updated information over the summer; no new venues had been added.

Having made several requests previously, she requested that members look over the data and let Denise know of any changes to be made before it is then made available to teachers.
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The Chair requested that Kim thank her husband on behalf of the committee for this undertaking.
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Gerald reported that arrangements had relaxed since the last lockdown with several schools now asking him to visit them. He expressed willingness to discuss how visits in person could be agreed with schools.

At this point Samantha joined.

#### **4 SACRE self-evaluation tool (Introduction to the new tool and planning the way forward using the new tool)**

Denise explained that the new tool had been revised to facilitate SACREs identifying their strengths, devising development plans and drafting their annual reports.

The rationale has remained the same but sections have been reordered; the management of SACREs is now the first section, given that it is the prerequisite for useful analysis of the other categories.

*(I MISSED A FEW MINUTES HERE AS MY CONNECTION DEACTIVATED)*

Denise suggested that the committee look at Section 1 in the next meeting to get a feel for how the new tool function, possibly in different rooms.

Kim noted that it appeared to have a more sensible structure.

She emphasised the necessity of members reading through the document before the meeting.

Caroline queried how the committee could transfer the learning gleaned from the meeting to getting schools engaged and demonstrating moral instruction to positively impact society.

The Chair responded that this essentially the committee's role, encouraging schools to participate.

Angela added that she had observed, in the many schools that she visited, significant efforts to teach children right and wrong and to foster respect for others. She challenged the fairness of distinguishing between faith schools and non-faith schools on their commitment to teaching right and wrong.

Kim G explained that she taught in a non-faith school and recently engaged on a learning walk on which she was surprised at how much the children learnt, remembered and valued understanding others' religions. She acknowledged this was an effect of the work she and her school colleagues had carried out. She added that the year group assemblies reflected these values, and were another source of pride in her school.

Sam echoed this, acknowledging that although something discretely projected through conversations in tutor times and hallways etc or role-modelled these values are being taught.

The Chair suggested that this agenda point be a standing item on the agenda.

Denise commented on the need for a rigorous approach.

Kim notified the committee that hard copies could be made available if required.

## **5 WORLDVIEWS – INTRODUCTION TO THE TOPIC LED BY JENNIFER AND KORKOR**

Jennifer explained that both Korkor and herself were interested in worldviews although not expert on the matter. By way of introduction, she explained that their focus would be on what a worldview is, rather than the arguments for or against that approach. They would then discuss how congruent or not the local syllabus was with this approach.

Korkor presented that 2015 definition of worldview by James W Sire.

Jennifer summarised that a worldview approach does not equate to studying religions any less, but has a greater focus on pupils interpreting the meaning and significance of info, and on opportunities to make connections between - and comparisons of - religions and non-religions beliefs.

Denise queried how one guards against engendering views that one religion/worldview is better than another.

Samantha replied that she found this approach engendered inclusion more than division.

Jennifer stated that although she could not answer that question, it was the type of question that needed to be asked.

Korkor highlighted the importance of allowing children to question and not covering the subject in a tokenistic way.

Kim G mentioned that children who have experienced something could often be its best teachers. She added how much more engaged children were now than previously.

Caroline commented that the title itself was engaging and inclusive.

KS summarised the PowerPoint slides, highlighting that:

1. The worldview approach emphasises fluid rather than rigid boundaries eg women priests in the Church of England, the commercialisation of aspects of religious festivals;
2. The approach opens discussions on continuity and continuity;
3. Its congruency in KS1 is exemplified in the KS1 The natural world unit and the KS2 Peace unit where children are given an opportunity to reflect on peace.
4. Examples of this approach not being sufficiently congruent with the syllabus are the need to include more explicit and developed opportunities for exploring important questions such as what is religion, the need to include more questions that prompt a greater level of interpretation and reflection, and the scope to increase opportunities to explore different worldview within religions, acknowledging that there are complexities within religions.

She conceded that in the primary curriculum not all of this could be covered but that it was important to acknowledge this

Korkor focussed on the secondary syllabus, advising that whether a school is delivering a 2- or 3-year program will impact how the units are developed. She acknowledged that the statutory units allow for a worldview approach.

She highlighted the following points:

1. Looking at why it's important to study religious studies, acknowledging the students may share the same faith without sharing the same viewpoint
2. There is scope to look at artefacts more, particularly those brought in by children, as she cited a girl who had brought her Qur'an into class, promoting discussion.

She highlighted two areas of congruence, and recognised that training needs and diffidence in staff may be obstacles.

She highlighted three books that were useful on this subject.

The Chair thanked both presenters for this presentation.

Denise reported that when the syllabus was written, the secondary syllabus was deliberately left open for teachers' approaches. She suggested training on a worldview approach could be provided.

Caroline commented that she found the theme of peace presented in the slide interesting. She queried if schools celebrated International Peace Day.

Korkor remarked on the difficulty of celebrating festivals in schools given the abundance of them.

Samantha reiterated that teachers, most of whom are not subject specialists, would benefit from the training.

JS commented that there are many opportunities for discussion but that RE tends to be the subject that teachers are the least happy delivering. This justified the reason to 'spell out the points' in the classroom as highlighted by the presentation.

Jennifer committed to share the presentation.
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Kim reported that she used the release of Stephen Hawking's biopic, *The Theory of Everything*, to trigger discussion in the science classroom about subjects such as disability and the origins of the universe.

Shaun reported that many of these themes are presented in schools' corporate worship. He acknowledged that 'worldview' was often mistaken for 'non-religious worldviews'.

He opined that, in a way, this was not a new development, but was a good reminder of the right way to approach teaching religious studies. He added that diversity in religion was to be encouraged.

Angela expressed the view that it represented an interesting development for early years being about the worlds that they inhabit.

Denise commented that if teachers focus on knowledge, children never have the chance to be reflective. She recognised that diffident teachers are not comfortable in allowing open discussion, due to their own anxiety, but that lack of time was another relevant factor. She reported that in developing the syllabus, the committee was mindful of the increasing the context and recognised the need to relax and free teachers.

She reminded the committee that the workshop on worldviews was on 10 November.

She reported that she had circulated the new Strictly RE information.

Jean expressed her incredulity at how teachers manage to fit all of these requirements in.

The Chair expressed a salute of teachers' attempts at navigating all of this material, on the back of this.

In response to the realisation that the meeting day was Rumi celebration day, Kim K read one of his poems.

## **6 MONITORING RE IN LEWISHAM SCHOOLS**

### **6A WEBSITE TRAWL. FEEDBACK FROM SACRE MEETING ON PILOTING**

Denise summarised that this agenda point was to encourage members to sign up.

She explained that one form for both phases was considered better than two, meaning that irrelevant stage-specific information would have to be ignored.

She noticed that many schools were not offering non-certificated courses, which the committee would have to look into as all pupils should be taught an accredited course even if not entered for examinations.

Denise advised that members enter key words in the search bar when carrying out this exercise as not all themes would be found in the RE section.

Kim K explained the form to the members.

Denise advised that, in the future, more deep dives and pronounced focus on RE were expected than had previously been the case. She emphasised the objective of this activity as to help schools to market what they were doing as well as enabling the committee to find out what schools were doing, in the spirit of positivity and support.

Kim K reported that her conversation with Forest Hill School had been about finding out what schools do.

Having carried out the activity for her own school, Samantha suggested including a social media link as a point of reference. She considered it useful as well as a good tool for teachers and schools.

She noted that some schools have chosen not to publicise details of their subject for fear of other school using this.

Kim added that the publication of this information could also be weaponised by parents against the school.

Samantha suggested that most secondary schools would not publish RE results on their websites.

She supported Denise's early viewpoint that a statement of the ethos/vision of the school is unlikely to be located in the RE section.

She further offered to show the committee how her form was completed (???)

Kim committed to circulate a new form and reiterated the request for all members involved with a specific school to complete it for their school, after which the activity would be widened.

Denise reported that she had found some websites impenetrable and require a password system.

She emphasised the importance of projecting the rationale as being to help schools. She commented that both school workforce data and exam results were in the public domain and therefore theoretically accessible to all anyway.

Kim suggested that the information gleaned from this activity could be used to produce a general report that Angela could mention in her school briefing.

Shaun added that it would be helpful to specify the type of school on the form as well as if RE learning is referenced outside of the classroom.

Angela suggested that schools be told that the committee will do this, in the spirit of transparency and being upfront, and make a copy of the form available for them (something that the Internal Auditors have previously done). In addition, informing schools needs to be done via the School Improvement practitioner.

She committed to agree its wording with Nick.

Denise suggested that points 6B and 6C be deferred to a later meeting in view of the time.

## **7 Holocaust Memorial Day 2022 – Theme ‘One day’ Lewisham plans (Gerald and Joan)**

Gerald read out the commitment by the Mayor’s Office, and suggested that the link for the live recording of the event be disseminated

He also expressed the intention for as many KS2 to 4 pupils to work on Holocaust education as possible.

He reminded the committee that in the past Lewisham would buy in a production team to facilitate workshops but that it was uncertain if that would be done next year.

He will let the committee know after the next planning meeting.

He asked if there were any comments that the committee wanted represented at the meeting.

Denise asked if all schools would be given anything, and whether the working group would be contacting all schools. She added that one alternative was that Lewisham Council circulates information requesting that all schools tune into the event.

Angela suggested that this be divided into primary and secondary.

This will be tabled as an action point in the next meeting.



Caroline reiterated the importance of all member supporting as much as possible.

## **8 Future meetings**

**Next SACRE meeting: Will be on Wednesday 24 November via Zoom.**

The Chair thanked all for coming.

Denise commented on the benefit of having additional presenters in the meeting.

The meeting ended at 8.40pm.